



## Dr G. Panigrahi (1924-2004)

Dr Gopinath Panigrahi passed away on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2004 in Kolkata. He was 80. He was Joint Director, Central Botanical Laboratory, Botanical Survey of India at the time of his retirement from Government Service.

Dr Panigrahi was born on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1924 in the village Baikunthpur in Bhadrak district, Orissa. He passed matriculation with first rank from Patna University in 1942. Later he took B. Sc Honours from Utkal University and M. Sc from Allahabad University. He joined Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, Orissa as Lecturer in Botany in 1948. He worked in UK for his Ph. D with Professor Irene Manton at the University of Leeds from 1952 to 1954. The area of his research was cytotaxonomy of Ferns and Angiosperms. He was the first botanist to produce hybrids in Ferns.

He joined Botanical Survey of India in 1956 and worked as Indian Liaison Officer at Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, UK from 1972 to 1975. At Kew, he worked with Dr W. D. Clayton on floristic relationships of Indian grasses using computer analysis.

As Deputy Director of Botanical Survey of India, he managed to reorganise 1.25 million specimens present in Central National Herbarium (CAL), Howrah in geographical sequence following the pattern of Kew herbarium (K). He also served as Deputy Director at Head Quarters, BSI, and CAL, Howrah. After retirement, he continued his taxonomic studies at Botanical Survey of India as Emeritus Scientist from 1982 to 1987.

He was an expert on plant nomenclature. He has published more than 300 scientific papers which included two new families (*Brachycaulaceae* and *Tectariaceae*), two new genera (*Brachycaulos* and *Parahaemionitis*), over 50 new species and a number of new combinations. The family *Rosaceae* in four volumes, *Flora of Bilaspur District* in two volumes and *Ferns and Fern Allies of Arunachal Pradesh – Tirap District* in two volumes are his monumental works. He worked on *Flora of the USSR* as the botanical editor and his masterly editing received high appreciation at international level.

He was Fellow of the Linnaean Society, London; Bangladesh Academy of Sciences; Indian Fern Society; Indian Botanical Society; Indian Society of Genetics and Plant Breeding and West Bengal Academy of Science and Technology. In 1994, he received Panchanan Maheshwari Gold Medal from Indian Botanical Society. Bestowing the prestigious E. K. Janaki Ammal National Award instituted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India for Taxonomy in 2002, the Committee observed 'the awardee is the most authoritative nomenclaturist in Asia and has made valuable contributions in stabilizing the scientific names of Indian flowering plants and Ferns'.

*Rheede* mourns the demise of this illustrious plant taxonomist.

Editors